

# Evaluating the Man-Up Programme in Youth Offending Teams

Dr Nicholas Blagden<sup>1</sup>

Christian Perrin<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sexual Offences Crime and Misconduct Research Unit  
Division of Psychology Nottingham Trent University  
Chaucer Building Burton Street  
Nottingham NG1 4B

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## Abstract

Masculinity in young men can be considered a dynamic risk factor. There is a call for programs and initiatives that not only engage adolescent boys in masculinity issues but also promote positive constructs of masculinity. The 'Man-up' programme is designed to support men and young men to explore the ways in which the concept of masculinity contributes to shaping their individual identity. The aim of this research evaluation was to explore young offenders' perceptions of the programme and whether the programme contributed to any personal change/development and what core learning they took from the course. The evaluation utilised a mixed-methods programme of research to address these aims. The quantitative results found that there was a pre/post course reduction in 'toughness' and increases in self-esteem and risk-taking perceptions. The qualitative results identified 4 superordinate themes 'reconstruing masculine self', 'self-realisation, awareness and reflection', 'group dynamics and course relationships' and 'unintended consequences'. The course assisted participants in helping to reconstrue aspects of being a man, made them think about the future and allowed for participants to consider their possible and desired selves. However, for some participants, the course appeared to reinforce some traditional stereotypical beliefs. The implications for course and recommendations are unpacked in the report.

## Introduction

Research has demonstrated that young adults (18-25 year olds) comprise one in ten of the population, however, they account for one third of individuals who are sent to prison annually, with high rates of reoffending (Prison Reform Trust, 2012). The association between offending and age can be demonstrated by the bell-shaped curve, which increases in adolescence (15-19) and declines for individuals in their early to mid 20's. There is some difference in the decline in offending for different offence types with a later decline for violent and drug offences (Losel & Bender, 2016; Lober, Farrington & Petechuk, 2013). Similarly, youth violent crime increases in frequency during adolescence and early adulthood for a subset of individuals, and then rapidly and continuously decreases throughout life (Loeber & Farrington, 2012). Youth criminality, like adult criminality, is gendered and as Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey (2012) have highlighted males account for a much larger percentage of violent offences, sex offences and many other criminal behaviours in comparison to females.

Research exploring this gender/crime disparity has suggested that masculinity is an important construct for understanding crime and violence (Messerschmidt, 1993; Kimmel & Messner, 2001; Whitehead, 2005). Traits that are key to masculine identity include toughness, dominance, and the willingness to resort to violence to resolve interpersonal conflicts (Krienert, 2003; Messerschmidt, 1993). Definitions of masculinity generally agree that masculine traits include power and authority (particularly over "subordinate" females), denying weaknesses and refusing help, displaying physical strength and dominance (often through aggressive acts) and heightened interest in sex (Courtenay, 2000). Courtenay (2000) has also suggested that males experience greater social pressure to conform to stereotypical gender roles and act in a masculine way, which may lead to criminal behaviour through multiple paths.

According to Connell (2005) masculinities are constructed, over time, in young people's encounters with a system of gender relations. Gender orders differ between societies and change over time (Connell, 2002). This will result in cultural diversity in the experiences of young people and in the masculinities they fashion. Research surrounding 'hegemonic masculinity' has been particularly important in helping to understand masculinity and crime. Hegemonic masculinity can be understood as a pattern of practice that allows for men's dominance over women. It embodies the most stereotypical image of what it is to 'be a man' and allows for the ideologically-legitimised subordination of women. This form of masculinity is sustained through culture, institutions and persuasion (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The hegemonic ideals of young men have been found to be reinforced by the attitudes and behaviours of older men in their communities, including their

fathers (Harland, 2011). In striving to achieve hegemonic masculinity young men believe they are required to refute any behaviour construed as feminine and to hide/disavow any such unwelcome character traits in themselves (Harland and McCreedy, 2014). Young men, particularly from working class communities, trapped in, and aspiring to, traditional, stereotypical male roles have become a defining feature of male identity and this is often linked to traditional masculine concepts such as toughness (ibid). Whitehead (2005) identified that masculinity may be a dynamic risk factor for male violence. Whitehead (2005) argues that masculinity only becomes a core aspect of a male's identity when he enters conflict with another man. Whitehead argued that young men are more likely to engage in "man on man violence" as a result of having a weaker identity in which masculinity is more central to self-definition in comparison to older males. These young men may then experience anxiety around their masculinity being challenged, a term labelled "masculine anxiety", which enhances young males' likelihood of behaving violently to reduce this anxiety.

Risk factors for youth crime include substance and alcohol abuse (particularly for violent crime) (see Herrenkohl, Lee, & Hawkins, 2012; Loeber & Farrington, 2012), poverty and social distrust (Bushman et al, 2016), family factors - many of the best established risk factors for youth violence are based in the family, including harsh and rejecting parents, interparental violence, child abuse and neglect, chaotic family life, inconsistent discipline, and poor monitoring (Bushman et al, 2016), poor self-control skills, ineffective/poor schooling and academic attainment, cultural influences e.g. masculinity (Kimmel and Mahler, 2003). While there are some risk factors that are difficult to address with intervention, however others are amenable to change. Self-control, self-regulation and social competence are risk factors for youth offending that can be addressed through intervention that focuses on improving social-cognitive and behavioural skills that are designed to increase empathy, perspective-taking, interpreting social cues and management of interpersonal conflict (Bushman et al, 2016).

As well as engaging in criminal behaviour, some young people are particularly susceptible to engaging in anti-social behaviour and risk-taking behaviour. Indeed, statistics reveal that young people drive faster than adults, have the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases, have the highest rate of self-reported drug use and commit the vast majority of crimes (Gullone, Moore, Moss & Boyd, 2000). Such risk-taking behaviour is linked to thrill seeking behaviours, minimisation of danger which put young people at an increased risk of personal injury or conviction with the legal system.

As Claussen (2017) states there is a call for programs and initiatives that not only engage adolescent boys in masculinity issues but also promote positive constructs of masculinity (see

Renzulli, Crasper, & Webster, 2013; Wolfe & Jaffe, 2003). Unfortunately, recent research identifies a lack of gender-specific programming for adolescent boys particularly interventions focused on promoting healthy and positive constructs of masculinity (Claussen, 2017, O'Neil et al., 2013). This links with arguments by Beesley and McGuire (2009) who state that there is a real need to take the issue of masculinity seriously in correctional and community interventions. A recent non-accredited programme focusing on masculinity has been piloted in a number of prisons in England and Wales and recently with young offenders in youth offending teams (YOTs). The 'Man-up' programme is designed to support men and young men to explore the ways in which the concept of masculinity contributes to shaping their individual identity. The programme uses active learning techniques and aims to challenge some of the attitudes and negative outcomes experienced by men as a result of wanting or needing to fulfil stereotypes and expectations. To this end the programme fills an important deficit within current intervention provision by focusing on the concept of masculinity. The aim of this evaluation is to explore young offenders' perceptions of the programme and whether the programme contributed to any personal change/development and what core learning they took from the course. The evaluation of the programme aimed to assess the programme on a number of psychometrically sound measures related to the outcomes of the Man-Up programme.

## Method

A mixed-methods design was implemented to evaluate any pre and post course changes in participants who had completed the man-up course at a Youth Offending Team based in England. The research also aimed to explore participants' experiences of the course and the impact the course had on participants. A strength of a mixed-methods approach is that it offsets the weakness of both qualitative and quantitative methods and can provide rich and detailed data that would not be possible through either approach alone (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Specifically, this research used a convergent mixed-methods design to gain a more complete understanding of the research topic. The purpose of the convergent design is "to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic" to best understand the research problem (Morse, 1991, p. 122). This design is used when the researcher wants to triangulate the methods by directly comparing and contrasting quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings for corroboration and validation purposes (Creswell & Clark, 2007). A convergent mixed-methods design is pragmatic in the sense that it is orientated toward exploring and solving problems in the "real world"; such a position reiterates that epistemologically and ontologically quantitative and qualitative research share many commonalities (Feilzer, 2010). The approach is also best suited for exploring under-researched phenomena and research evaluations (Creswell & Clark, 2007). This research was implemented using two research

strands, which were conducted simultaneously, as is common using the convergent approach. The two phases including the results of the phases are detailed over the coming sections.

## Quantitative Study

The quantitative phase of the research evaluation explored pre and post course differences on measures related to the outcomes of the MAN-UP programme. The measures assessed whether participation on the Man-up programme had an effect on masculine beliefs and norms, risk taking behaviour, beliefs about offending behaviour and self-esteem. The measures were chosen due to hypothesised relationships with the aims of the man up programme. The measures were administered pre-course and then approximately a week after participation on the course. In total  $n=10$  provided pre and post course information. The demographic information (for the participants which provided it) is provided in table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information

	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age	8	15.13	2.10	13	18
Age at first arrest	6	14.00	2.00	12	16
Number of prior arrests	8	2.80	1.64	1	5

The available demographic information demonstrates that the sample had multiple contacts with the criminal justice system prior to attending the man- up course.

## Measures

**Male Role Norms Inventory –Adolescent Revised** (Levant et al, 2012) – The MRNI-AR is a 29 item measure of the endorsement of traditional masculine ideologies and male role norms. The measure consists of three subscales ‘Emotionally Detached Dominance’, ‘Toughness’, and Avoidance of Femininity (Levant et al., 2012). Boys indicate their agreement with statements (e.g., “Guys should play with trucks rather than dolls”) on a 7-point Likert-type scale (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). A total MRNI-A-r score is obtained through the averaging of scores on all 29 items.

Higher scores indicate more agreement with traditional masculinity ideologies, and lower scores indicate less agreement with traditional masculinity ideologies.

**The Implicit Theory of Offending Behaviour** (Blagden et al., 2014) is a reimagining of the domain-specific implicit theories of intelligence and personality, and Gerber and O'Connell's (2012) implicit theory of crime and criminality (self and other). The 'implicit theory of offending behaviour (self)' (ITOB) is concerned with prisoners' beliefs in whether they could change their offending behaviour. The scale is a six-item measure and consists of items such as "My offending behaviour is a part of me that I can't change very much". Participants indicated how much they agreed with statements on a 6-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). Previous studies have shown that the measure has good internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .893$ ) (Blagden et al, 2014).

**Rosenerg Self-esteem** - (Rosenberg, 1965) – The Rosenberg Self Esteem measure consists of 10 items assessing global self-esteem (e.g., "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself"). Previous studies have reported alpha reliabilities for the RSE ranging from .72 to .88 (Robins, Hendin & Trzesniewski, 2001).

**The Adolescent Risk-taking Questionnaire** (ARQ; Gullone & Moore, 2000). Risk-taking behaviours and judgements were assessed using the two-part risk questionnaire developed on the basis of adolescent-nominated risk behaviours (Moore and Gullone, 1996). The 73-item questionnaire involves the rating of each item twice, first in relation to judgement of riskiness (on a 5-point Likert scale: 0=not at all risky, 1=not very risky, 2=risky, 3=very risky and 4=extremely risky) and a second time in relation to frequency of participation in the behaviour (also on a 5-point scale: 0=never done, 1=hardly ever done, 2=done sometimes, 3=done often, to 4=done very often). A total risk judgement score is calculated by adding ratings on all items, with a high score indicating a stronger overall judgement of riskiness for the behaviours depicted in the questionnaire. Similarly, a total behaviour score is calculated by summing the frequency rating of all items, with a high score indicating a higher overall level of participation in risky activity.

## Quantitative Results

Table 2 details the pre and post course means and standard deviations for the measures used to evaluate the man-up course. Using guidance from Stevens (1996) which recommends using a less conservative alpha with a small  $n$  research a less conservative alpha was set (in this case set at 0.1) for detecting pre/post course change.



Table 2 Pre and post course scores on measures

Measure	Pre-Mean	Pre-SD	Post-Mean	Post-SD	<i>T</i>	Df	<i>P</i>	Effect size
Male Norms: Emotionally detached dominance	3.30	.484	2.99	.941	.882	8	.403	.09
Male Norms: Avoidance of femininity	4.26	.905	3.92	.142	.700	8	.504	.07
Male Norms: Toughness	4.80	.718	3.95	.888	5.810	8	.001	.82
ITOB	4.05	.566	3.99	.719	.193	9	.850	.002
Adolescent risk taking behaviour	16.20	9.56	20.12	20.63	-.732	7	.488	.04
Adolescent Risk Perception	23.00	9.9	41.33	11.72	-3.446	8	.005	.63
Self-Esteem	15.90	3.21	19.30	3.88	-2.613	9	.020	.46

Paired samples *t*-tests were conducted to evaluate the impact of the Man-Up intervention on male gender role norms, beliefs about offending behaviour, adolescent risk taking behaviour and self-esteem. A sequential bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons was conducted, though all pre and post course significant results remained statistically significant (Abdi, 2010). The effect size was calculated using the eta squared statistic.

There were significant pre and post course mean changes for the male role norm of toughness, adolescent risk perception and self-esteem. There was a statistically significant decrease in mean scores for the male role norm of toughness from pre-course ( $M = 4.26$ ,  $SD = .484$ ) to post course ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = .142$ ). The eta squared statistic (.82) indicates a very large effect size. There was a statistically significant increase in adolescent risk perception from pre-course ( $M = 23.00$ ,  $SD = 9.9$ ) to post-course ( $M = 41.33$ ,  $SD = 11.72$ ). The eta squared statistic (.63) indicates a small-moderate

effect size. There was also a statistically significant increase in self-esteem from pre-course ( $M = 15.90$ ,  $SD = 3.21$ ) to post-course ( $M = 19.30$ ,  $SD = 3.88$ ). The eta squared statistic (.46) indicates a very large effect.

## Qualitative study

The qualitative interviews featured in this research were used to gain an understanding of participants ( $n=7$ ) experiences and learning from the Man-Up programme. Interview schedules focused on how participants felt before participating in Man-Up, and what they thought about gender roles and masculinity at this time point. They explored the content of the course, and how participants experienced and learned from this content. They also focused on how participants might embed and use their newly-acquired knowledge in everyday life, if at all. All interviews in this research were semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews allow participants to discuss issues of central concern to both themselves and the research topic. This interviewing style is flexible and naturally enables participants to elaborate on issues important to them. In order to facilitate discussion, all questions were kept open (Knight, Wykes & Hayward, 2003). This style of interviewing also enables “rapport to be developed; allows participants to think, speak and be heard; and are well suited to in-depth and personal discussion” (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005: 22).

## Qualitative Data Analysis

Data were analysed using thematic analysis; a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns and themes within a data set. It aims to capture rich detail and represent the range and diversity of experience within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It differs from other qualitative methodological approaches in that it is not tied to an explicit theoretical assumption or position. Thematic analysis has been described as a ‘contextualist method’, sitting between the two poles of constructionism and realism. This position thus acknowledges the ways in which individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways in which the broader social context impinges on those meanings. As such, thematic analyses are seen as reflecting ‘reality’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis adhered to the principles of qualitative thematic analysis as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data analysis commenced with detailed readings of all the transcripts, and then initial coding of emergent themes. A process of sorting initial patterns then took place, and this was followed by the identification of meaningful patterns in the data, and then an interpretation of those

patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data was organised systematically and themes were identified and reviewed. The final themes were representative of the sample as a whole. A form of inter-rater reliability was performed on the data, which involved the analysis being ‘audited’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited in Seale, 1999 p. 467) in that both authors of the report coded the data separately before synthesising the final themes. This process ensured that the interpretations had validity.

## Qualitative Results

The themes that emerged from the coding of the data are presented in the table below.

Table 2 Superordinate and subordinate themes

Superordinate	Subordinate
Reconstructing masculine self	Generating alternative versions of manhood
	Perceptions of being a man
	Portraying a masculine self
Self-realisation, awareness and reflection	Increased self-reflection and self-realisation
	Self-awareness and personal change
	Looking to the future
Group dynamics and course relationships	Facilitating change
	Cohesive Environment
Unintended Consequences	Reinforcement of traditional stereotypical roles
	Ensuring personal challenge
	Attrition

The analysis revealed four superordinate themes, ‘reconstructing masculine self’, ‘self-realisation, awareness and reflection’, ‘group dynamics and course relationships’ and ‘unintended consequences’. The main aspects of these superordinate themes will be unpacked in the following analysis.

### Superordinate Theme 1: Reconstructing masculine self

Participants articulated how the course had assisted in them reconstructing and reconceptualising what being a ‘man’ means to them. Participants emphasised how they had begun to reconsider men’s role and what was important for being a man.

#### Extract 1

when it came to the end of the course... I started realising, how society wants you to be and that sort of stuff, that's not what a man actually is...made me notice that I realised being a man is not about having all the luxurious stuff more about basically just standing up on your own two feet and getting stuff done...being a man is looking after your family yeah and being responsible, that's what a man is, sums it all up being a responsible person being a man. Not doing crazy stuff or getting into trouble but yeah being responsible

In this extract the participant's self-perception has begun to change through the conceptualising that to be a man he needs to be able to stand up on his own two feet and be a responsible person. Through accepting responsibility for him and his family he is in turn strengthening his social bonds and social support network which have both been shown to be protective factors for youth offending and later life criminality (Borum et al 2002; Bushman et al, 2016). In numerous extracts participants appeared to be engaging in a form of 'active responsibility-taking' (Ware & Mann, 2012) in that there was a recognition that they could not change the past, but that they had control and ownership of future behaviors and that was process was linked to their reconceptualisation of being a man.

#### Extract2

Respondent: Made me think, you know, I don't have to be like that, doing all stupid stuff, I can be different, that to me is a man. Not getting involved with all stupid stuff, just doing things for a laugh or whatever, but saying I actually want to do something different and going for it

Interviewer: Sounds like it got you thinking about the future

Respondent: Yeah it did, what I want from it and what kind of a man I wanna be

Participants spoke about how the course began to make them think and challenge their views of being a 'man', while demonstrating that there were alternative ways of construing 'man'. The course, in some ways, appeared to allow 'headspace' for participants to reflect on their current situation and crucially reflect on where they want to go (Perrin and Blagden 2014). This appeared to provide participants with an opportunity for reflection and this is important for self-growth and self-development. Blagden et al (2014), argue that headspace allows for participants to reflect on their

'self in transition'. The course also allowed participants to reflect on the pressures and expectations they feel as a man.

Extract 3

It's that pressure...you feel a pressure to act in ways

Extract 4

You feel that, you basically have to have money, drive a certain car, be doing certain things, so that basically put pressure on me to be that man they [his view of society] wanted me to be...the course helped me to change, it's actually helped me a lot, made me see things in a different way...think about being a man differently

Extracts 3 and 4 highlight the pressures some participants felt with their stereotypical conceptualisation of man and what was required to achieve this conceptualisation. Literature suggests that men put more pressure on themselves to fulfil their gender roles (see e.g. Pleck 1981). Doyle (1983) and Eisler and Skidmore (1987) have noted that attempting to live up to these standards of the masculine stereotype has stressful effects on men as they strive for power through competition with peers while engaging with a restricted set of emotions. The Man Up course appeared to allow some participants to reconcile past preconceptions of what a man should be and that they were not necessarily the only way to understand masculinity. Participants views of masculinity were thus malleable with participants beginning to reconstitute being a man.

### Superordinate Theme 3: Self-realisation, awareness and reflection

Participants who had completed the course appeared to have an increased self-awareness and the course also seemed to increase self-reflection in the participants which enabled them to think about where they are now and crucially where do they want to go.

Extract 5

It taught me what I need to do in my life to get to be my opinion of what a man is...helped me to know that I needed to mature, that I was making stupid mistakes and that one of these mistakes could turn into something serious and I could get done for it properly...

#### Extract 6

I was talking to one of the women there and she was saying about thinking about what I do before I do it, because normally I do stuff and think about the consequences after. Making me stop and think about things and what I'm doing

Extract 5 and 6 demonstrate how the course was enabling participants to consider what kind of a man they want to be in the future and as a consequence where they want to be in the future. Importantly the course appeared to enhance participants' cognitive skills particularly around the ability to stop and think and generating alternative solutions. This is important as interventions which promote cognitive and enhanced thinking skills have been found to demonstrably reduce recidivism (Landenberger and Lipsey, 2005; Travers et al, 2014).

#### Extract 7

I know for a fact that I need to change, like what I'm doing at the minute with what I'm doing with school and outside school, like change, now I know the consequences now I know how I might end up if I don't, but I also know how I could turn out if I do and I'd prefer to turn out good

#### Extract 8

The course got me thinking, before I was thinking that I can get through school and change after and then I realised that if I did that it may be too late.

The course appeared that it assisted participants in realisation that they needed to change and also helped to facilitate that change. Extract 7 demonstrates how the course helped participants to construe more positive and pro-social futures, by not just focusing on the negative consequences (I know how I might end up), but by consider desired positive futures (I know how I could turn out). Extract 7 offer a powerful narrative of a desire to change and wanting to turn out 'good'. The importance of being able to construct desirable selves, desirable imagined futures and distancing the self from 'old' offending selves has been found to be important in the crime desistance process (Paternoster and Bushway, 2009; Stone, 2015; Vaughan, 2007). As can be noted in extract 7 and 8 there is a realisation of where they are and where they want to go and they are cognisant that they now need to make a change. Paternoster and Bushway (2009) acknowledge the future self is not merely a fantasy, rather it is connected to 'current selves and past experiences' involving not only hopes and goals but also fears and uncertainties. Here the participants understand where they may

go if they do not make a change and this is motivating them to want to make a positive change (Paternoster and Bushway, 2009).

### Superordinate theme 3: Group dynamics and course relationships

The participants were overwhelming positive about the support they received from the facilitators on the course and how this enabled the participants to engage and disclose. This is important as this client group in particular can be particularly difficult to engage with interventions (Prior and Mason, 2010).

#### Extract 9

Normally meeting new people, I find it difficult and they made it easier for me

#### Extract 10

Put us at ease, you'd come in and they be like happy and be like how's your day been? They seemed interested

The general psychotherapeutic literature stresses the importance of meaningful relationships between therapist and patient and, in offender behaviour programmes, emphasis is placed on the responsivity issue of the therapeutic alliance. The therapeutic alliance is pivotal for effective treatment with a constructive relationship characterised by warmth, empathy, respect, rewarding behaviour, and genuineness (see, for example, Ackerman & Hilsenroth, 2003). Rogers (1951) outlined how genuineness in relationships can promote personal growth and development in individuals. Indeed, it may be that social interactions with the facilitators for these young men could be considered testing grounds for future interaction with others.

#### Extract 11

The course exceeded my expectations I never thought they would go into that much detail [course content] about things just to help us make, I didn't know they that they would care that much

Following from the previous analysis extract 11 demonstrates how for some the course exceeded expectations and that the participants felt that the facilitators genuinely wanted to help them.

#### Superordinate theme 4: Unintended consequences

While participants were clear that they had a positive view of the course and had positive experiences which appeared to very constructive for participants there also appeared to be some unintended consequences from the course. These specifically centred about aspects of the course which prompted participants to think about their constructions of what it is to be man. However, despite course attendance participants were still engaged in stereotypical beliefs.

##### Extract 12

Respondent: Men work harder...

Interviewer: Ok, was this a belief you had before the course

Respondent: Yeah

Interviewer: And has this changed at all

Respondent: Nah, I still think that way

##### Extract 13

I wouldn't work harder if I was a girl...women have different roles to men, different jobs, men work harder

Extracts 12 and 13 demonstrate how some participants were engaged in views of men that were traditional stereotypical which centred about men being 'harder' workers. As well as some participants espousing traditional masculine roles and stereotypical gender norms, there were more subversive signs of legitimising stereotypically gendered beliefs or at the very least not challenging these beliefs. Again these focused around what it is to be a man.



Extract 14

Being a protector, it's our [man's] job to do it, protect family

Extract 15

Respondent: Having a job supporting the family, having food on table, having family, not fighting and not drinking, mainly the ideas we picked up during the course, they were the main things that we talked about

Interviewer: Was this a focus of the course....

Respondent: Yeah we spent a lot of time going over them, these were the main things, you know, having a job, being a provider

In extracts 14 and 15 participants are articulating traditional 'male' roles as their view of a 'man' and these appeared to conform to what has been termed benevolent sexism. Ambivalent Sexism Theory proposed by Glick and Fiske (1996) differentiates between 2 forms of ambivalent sexism, hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism denotes woman as easily insulted, ungrateful of males, seeking to obtain authority over males, and manipulative with their sexuality. This form of sexism was very rarely articulated by the participants. Benevolent sexism denotes women as weak, pure, moral and places them on a pedestal. These unhealthy demonstrations of masculinity develop from a need to protect women and the adherence of stereotypical gender roles. This would include being a 'protector' or 'provider'. Additionally, Gölge, Sanal, Yavuz and Arslanoglu-Çetin (2016) suggests that ambivalent sexism develops due to the reinforcement of stereotypical gender norms, the inequality of genders in society and the following of traditional familial values. While these were displayed by the participants perhaps worryingly these appeared not to be challenged by facilitators of the group and this may inadvertently have reinforced such beliefs.

## Discussion and Implications

There is growing interest in the impacts of gender ideology on adolescent boys' well-being and there is a call for programs to support the development of healthy and positive constructs of masculinity for young males. There has also been limited attention paid to non-profit community-based organisations in delivering programmes that challenge traditional masculine ideologies in community and school-based settings (Cluassen, 2017; Claussen et al, 2016). The evaluation of the

Man-Up programme lends support for the continued implementation of course for this client group. The evaluation provides some evidence that the course lessens boys' endorsement of some masculine roles. Participants in this course had significantly lower post course scores on 'toughness', which forms part of traditional masculine identity and which contributes to male on male violence in young adults (Whitehead, 2005). There was also an increase in perceptions of risk-taking behaviours i.e. the extent to which one perceives a given activity as carrying the potential for adverse consequences). This is an important finding as altering the perception of risk may alter the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviour (Cestac, Paran & Delhomme, 2011). These are important findings as research suggests that as boys move into later adolescence their struggle with masculinity intensifies and they are more likely to rigidly adhere to exaggerated gendered notions. Participation may provide the boys with some degree of "inoculation" from this intensification (Abrams, Anderson-Nathe & Aguilar, 2008). There was also a significant increase in self-esteem scores. While self-esteem and young offending is complicated (Gudjonsson & Sigurdsson, 2007), for general wellbeing and protection from mental health issues in young people in general self-esteem is important (Ekeland, Heian, & Hagen, 2005).

The qualitative findings have implication for how participants were construing masculinity post course and the programme appeared to have some effect on some participants in terms of self-reflection and self-identity. Whether a primary aim of the programme or an ancillary outcome, the programme appeared to assist participants in thinking about the future and with their consequential thinking. There was a recognition in participants that they needed to change if they were to achieve their desired future selves. The narratives of some participants linked with possible selves. A possible self is a future orientated construct of "self" formulated by an individual in relation to hopes, fears, and aspirations for the future. Possible selves draw on versions of the self in the past and how they would like to be in the future (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In the qualitative component participants were clear that they wanted to make a change and had aspirations of what they wanted to achieve in the future. Such possible selves not only contain images of their desired self (or what they fear becoming), but they can also provide a "roadmap" on how to achieve that self and avoid the feared negative self. The 'roadmap' is referred to as the self-regulating component as it allows comparison between past selves, current working self and the possible self and provides directions and strategies for narrowing the current and possible self-gap (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). Participants articulated roadmaps for achieving the desired self through staying in school, importance of education, through not engaging in reckless behaviour and through wanting a positive life. Such narratives are akin to those espoused by crime desisters in that they are not 'doomed to

deviance', their life biographies are not written for them and they can make a positive change (see e.g. Maruna, 2001).

There were some 'unintended consequences', which seemingly need to be addressed in the Man Up programme moving forward. There seemed to be some legitimising of stereotypical masculine beliefs and this was a particular problem for the course when focusing on what it is to be a 'man'. For example, there appeared to be reinforcement of stereotypical beliefs of man as a 'bread winner'. However, this may be an issue of programme implementation, training and delivery rather than a core issue with the course itself. Indeed, lack of consistency, co-ordination which results in inconsistent delivery is a challenge for community-based programmes, particularly those working with young people in schools or institutions (Claussen et al, 2016). There are also some obvious limitations to this research in that the sample size for the two studies is small. While this is the norm and accepted for qualitative research, the programme evaluation component is small. This limits the generalisability of the study.

## Recommendations

The Man-Up evaluation has generated a number of key recommendations that should be considered for future evaluations and the running of the Man-Up programme. These recommendations are detailed below.

- 1) The issue of unintended consequences needs serious consideration as it threatens to undermine programme integrity and contravene the nature and goals of the Man Up course. It is recommended that the programme block on what it is to be a 'man' is reviewed and that in training facilitators it is clear that challenge needs to be supplied to stereotypical masculine beliefs.
- 2) This evaluation is the first step in an emerging evidence-base for the Man Up programme and there are numerous positive benefits including decreases in 'toughness', increases in self-esteem and risk-taking perceptions. These are important, especially for the target client group. Thus the programme appears to have an effect with young adults in YOT settings and the programme should be implemented more fully with this client group. More programme completers and post-course interviews will help establish the Man-Up evidence-base and lead to less cautious research findings.
- 3) Given the lack of third sector programmes for school age boys on challenging traditional masculinity, the course providers should consider further pilots of the course in schools particularly for the ages range 14-18.

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